

as an index of our progress in ballistic missile work.

Our satellite program has never been conducted as a race with other nations. Rather, it has been carefully scheduled as part of the scientific work of the International Geophysical Year.

I consider our country's satellite program well designed and properly scheduled to achieve the scientific purposes for which it was initiated. We are, therefore, carrying the program forward in keeping with our arrangements with the international scientific community.

(At 10:31, the President entered the conference room.)

THE PRESIDENT: Please sit down.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Do you have any questions you would like to ask me?

Q. Smith, United Press. Mr. President, Russia has launched an earth satellite. They also claim to have had a successful firing of an intercontinental ballistics missile, none of which this country has done. I ask you, sir, what are we going to do about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let's take, first, the earth satellite as opposed to the missile, because they are related only indirectly in the physical sense, and in our case not at all.

The first mention that was made of an intercontinental -- of an earth satellite that I know of, was about the spring of 1955 -- I mean the first mention to me -- following upon a conference in Rome where plans were being laid for the working out of the things to be done in the International Geophysical Year. Our people came back and with studying a recommendation of that conference that we now undertake, the world undertake, the launching of a small earth satellite, and somewhere in, I think May or June of 1955, it was recommended to me, through the Committee of or by the Committee for the International Geophysical Year, and through the National Science Foundation, that we undertake this project with a satellite to be launched somewhere during the Geophysical Year, which was from June 1957 until December 1958.

The sum asked for to launch a missile was 22 million dollars and it was approved.

For the government, the National Science Foundation was made the monitor of the work, for the simple reason that from the beginning the whole American purpose and design in this effort has been to produce the maximum in scientific information.